

Downtown Providence District Management Authority

Board of Directors meeting minutes

Thursday, July 20, 2006 8:30am

1. Roll Call

Director Granoff called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

Directors present: Michael Corso, Robert Gagliardi, Evan Granoff, Tina Harlow, Richard Lappin, Chris Placco, Maria Ruggieri, and Stanley Weiss.

Others present: Joe DiBattista, Ex-Officio Member; Dan Baudouin, Executive Director of the Providence Foundation; Joelle Crane, Program Manager of the Providence Foundation; Rena Masten Leddy, Urban Place Consulting; Frank LaTorre, DID Director of Public Space; Leslie Huikko, DID Office Manager; Frank Zammarelli, Operations Manager for Block-By-Block.

2. Approval of the minutes from the Board Meeting of 6/15/06

Director Ruggieri motioned to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2006 board meeting. Director Gagliardi seconded the motion and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Gagliardi yes

Director Granoff yes

Director Harlow yes

Richard Lappin yes

Chris Placco yes

Maria Ruggieri yes

Stanley Weiss yes

Therefore, the motion passed.

3. Election of DPDMA Board Officers for FY 2006-2007

Director Lappin motioned to re-elect the current board officers for the current fiscal year. Director Gagliardi seconded this motion. There being no other nominations, the Chairman closed nominations and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Director Gagliardi yes

Director Granoff yes

Director Harlow yes

Richard Lappin yes

Chris Placco yes

Maria Ruggieri yes

Stanley Weiss yes

Therefore, the motion passed.

4. Financial Report

Leslie Huikko of Urban Place Consulting presented the financial reports with the caveat that the year-end reports are likely to be revised, pending the outcome of the audit, which is currently underway.

The reports show a financial position that is consistent with the projected spending that was anticipated during the 2007 budget

planning process, with the exception of the Special Projects line item, where spending was lower than anticipated. The funds that were allocated for the planter projects, sidewalk repairs, information cart, and window banners are being carried forward into FY2007, as these projects have longer timelines than originally anticipated.

Director Weiss motioned to accept the financial reports as presented. Director Placco seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Director Corso yes

Director Gagliardi yes

Director Granoff yes

Director Harlow yes

Richard Lappin yes

Chris Placco yes

Maria Ruggieri yes

Stanley Weiss yes

Therefore, the motion passed.

The 2007 invoices were generated in-house using QuickBooks software and were mailed in early July. A third of the property-owners who have paid thus far have exercised their option to pay for the entire fiscal year in a lump sum payment.

Ms. Huikko requested the board's permission to write-off balance on Accounts Receivable that were over- or under-paid by 15 cents or

less, due to rounding. It was also requested the remaining balance for Trinity Presbyterian Church be written off, as they are of tax-exempt status and have clearly articulated their preference to not participate. The board agreed to these actions with no vote necessary.

The Board agreed that Frank LaTorre would make contact with the Consulate of Portugal to request their voluntary participation for FY2007, as this organization, while tax-exempt, agreed to participate at the time of the DID's inception.

Rena Masten of Urban Place Consulting presented an overview of the errors in zone classification within the original property database, which resulted in under and over-assessed parcels. The Executive Committee decided to refund those property owners who over-paid due to incorrect invoices. Those property owners who under-paid due to this internal error will be invited to make back-payments, but not required to do so. The 2007 invoices for the affected parcels have not been mailed yet. Leslie Huikko has drafted letters that will accompany the adjusted 2007 invoices. The chairman will approve the content of these letters prior to mailing. The full board approved this process.

5. Operations Committee Report

Frank LaTorre presented the report from the July 11 Operations Committee meeting.

The DID's cooperation with the State and City officials continues as we move toward the execution of Contract 1, which will begin in Spring 2007. The scope of Contract 1 is Washington Street from Eddy to Empire and on Westminster Street from Mathewson to Empire. At this meeting, it was confirmed that brick repairs will be made with comparable brick.

The DID has now assumed full responsibility for the planters from GroundWork Providence because the planters did not meet expectations. We have taken over the purchasing and planting responsibility because they did not meet expectations. Next year, we will start with hanging baskets, they are attractive and less likely to be vandalized or used as trash receptacles.

Francisco Ramirez, Deputy Director of Operations for the City continues to work closely with those seeking permits to clearly state their obligation to return the area to it's original state using the same materials.

6. Marketing Report

Joelle Crane of the Providence Foundation presented the marketing report.

Downtown Marketing Advisory Committee is underway. Advertising Ventures is in the process of developing a slogan/tag line for downtown that complements the DID image. The next meeting is Tuesday, July 25 at Advertising Ventures' office.

The banners for the vacant windows are currently being printed at Concept Link. We are printing 2 on a sturdy paper backing and 3 will be made of canvas. Using both materials will allow us to determine which one is the more durable before printing the second batch.

Ms. Crane is compiling a draft Request For Proposals to marketing companies for website re-design of the DID's site at www.providencedowntown.com. Both the DID Marketing Committee and the Downtown Advisory Committee will be involved in the web designer selection process. Once the designer is selected, he or she will meet with the full DPDMA Board.

Director Ruggieri reported on the community information kiosks. Cornish Associates' in-house architect is working on a design that will complement the existing streetscape while integrating creative elements such as unique rooftops on each kiosk. The following three locations have been identified as being highly visible and subject to significant foot traffic: in front of the Johnson & Wales campus on Weybosset, in front of AS220 on Empire, and in the Financial District near RISD. The anticipated cost is approximately \$13,000 per kiosk. Director Placco indicated that J&W might be able to fund a kiosk, and he will look into it.

Director Harlow announced that PWCVB would potentially be interested in contributing funds for information kiosks. She plans to

make the request at the next Community Affairs Committee meeting. It was suggested that a fourth location be established between the mall and downtown, which might be a logical Director Harlow agreed to write a letter of request and to have Frank LaTorre and Directors Ruggieri and Corso of the marketing committee review it.

Joe DiBattista has offered to donate space on the Civic Center garage to create a large community bulletin board.

Dan Baudouin will be setting up a meeting with Martha Sheridan, who is the new President of the PWCVB and has expressed an interest in discussing an improved wayfinding/signage program for downtown.

Frank LaTorre reported that the mobile information cart has a new target roll-out date of September 9, as the carpenter is behind schedule. PWCVB will train the DID Safety Team members who will be staffing this cart. J&W students who are engaged in volunteer work for credit can also contribute.

The board recommended budgeting money for a professional photographer to take the photos for the cart. Director Corso suggested contacting Scott Lappum, a talented Providence photographer who is starting an apprenticeship through AS220. It would be important that the DID structure the arrangement so that it owns the photos that are taken and used.

7. Report from Urban Place Consulting and Director of Public Space

Frank LaTorre introduced his project matrix, which identifies the tasks and timelines for projects on which he is currently working.

The DID's recently formed Ordinance Committee consists of Joe DiBattista, Richard Lappin and two of Richard's staff members: Carolyn and Amy. The Committee is researching the ordinances currently on the books in Providence, as well as in other communities that are successfully managing issues similar to those experienced within the district. The goals are to provide education about the status quo and to then use this information to propose changes that will enhance the quality of life downtown. Successful enforcement strategies for existing and new ordinances are being researched, as well. Topics include the following: newsracks, sidewalk repair, snow removal, noise/decibel levels, panhandling, and responsible hospitality.

8. Report from Block-by-Block

Mr. Zammarelli presented the Clean and Safe Program statistics for the month of June 2006.

The amount of trash collected is higher than in previous months and the number of graffiti removal jobs is lower than at this time last year.

The rate of interaction with passive panhandlers has increased , though the individuals involved is consistent. Reports of aggressive panhandling are lower compared with the same period last year.

The special projects and clean teams are implementing the weed eradication program. Mr. Zammarelli is looking into a season-long weed killer in an attempt to minimize maintenance hours.

The Mayor's graffiti removal team is operational, but is not currently working downtown, with the exception of public properties, including City Hall and the parks. Frank LaTorre has met with City Officials to emphasize the importance of the City's removal of graffiti from public properties, as the DID is removing the graffiti on private properties.

9. Other business

Joe DiBattista expressed a concern that the proposed casino in West Warwick will draw business out of Downtown Providence. A brief discussion followed regarding issues of concern, including whether it is appropriate for the DID Board to take an official position on the proposal. Those present identified the need for broader rate-payer input before committing further to the issue. The board agreed to re-visit this topic at the August 17 board meeting.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Huikko